

## CLAIMS

We claim:

5           1. A system for managing user specific-data, comprising:  
          a profile client associated with a user device, the user  
device having an Internet interface for accessing nodes on the  
Internet; and

          a profile application programming interface allowing the  
10 profile client to access user-specific data from a profile  
server,

          the profile client operable to retrieve the user-specific  
data associated with a user currently logged into the user  
device, the user-specific data retrieved from the profile  
15 server via the profile application programming interface, the  
profile client further operable to store the retrieved user-  
specific data on the user device to be used as user-specific  
data for the user when communicating to one or more nodes  
during the time the user is logged into the user device,

20           the profile client further operable to intercept data  
communicated from the user device to the one or more nodes,  
and insert the user-specific data, if any, in the data before  
the data is communicated to the one or more nodes,

          the profile client also operable to intercept data  
25 communicated from the one or more nodes to the user device,  
and extract the user-specific data, if any, to store the user-  
specific data in the profile server,

          wherein the user-specific data is maintained over  
multiple user sessions, independent of devices that the user  
30 uses to communicate with the one or more of the nodes on the  
Internet.

2. A system for managing user specific-data, comprising:  
a profile client associated with a user device, the user  
5 device having an interface for accessing nodes on a  
distributed network;  
a profile server operable to store user-specific data;  
and  
a profile application programming interface operable to  
10 allow the profile client to access the user-specific data from  
a profile server,  
the profile client operable to synchronize the user-  
specific data stored in the profile server and the user-  
specific data stored locally in the user device,  
15 the profile client further operable to monitor the user-  
specific data stored locally in the user device, and the  
profile client operable in response to detecting a change in  
the user-specific data stored locally in the user device,  
transmitting the change to the profile server,  
20 wherein the user-specific data corresponding to a user is  
maintained over multiple user sessions, independent of devices  
that the user uses to communicate with the one or more nodes  
on the distributed network.

25 3. A system for managing user specific-data, comprising:  
a profile client associated with a user device, the user  
device having an Internet software for accessing nodes on the  
Internet;  
a profile server operable to store user-specific data;  
30 and

a profile application programming interface operable to allow the profile client to access the user-specific data from the profile server,

the profile client operable to retrieve the user-specific data associated with a user currently logged into the user device, the user-specific data retrieved from the profile server via the profile application programming interface, the profile client further operable to store the retrieved user-specific data on the user device to be used as user-specific data for the user when communicating to one or more nodes during the time the user is logged into the user device,

the profile client further operable to detect and transmit to the profile server any additional user-specific data used in communicating between the user and the one or more nodes during a session,

wherein the user-specific data is maintained over multiple user sessions, independent of devices that the user uses to communicate with the one or more of the nodes on the Internet.

4. The system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the system further includes a profile server having one or more database for storing the user-specific data.

5. The system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the user-specific data is deleted from the user device after the user logs off from the user device.

6. The system as claimed in claim 2, wherein the profile client synchronizes the user-specific data periodically.

7. The system as claimed in claim 2, wherein the profile client continuously monitors the user-specific data.

8. The system as claimed in claim 3, wherein the profile server is operable to detect profile event changes and communicate the profile event changes to the profile client.

9. The system as claimed in claim 3, wherein the profile application programming interface includes one or more utilities for accessing the user specific-data on the profile server.

10. A method for managing user-specific data, comprising:  
intercepting data communicated between a user operating from a user device and a node on network;  
determining whether a user-specific data is included in the data;  
extracting the user-specific data; and  
transmitting the extracted user-specific data to a server for storage,

wherein the next time the user communicates to the node, the user-specific data can be retrieved and used regardless of which device the user is using for communicating to the node.

11. The method for managing user-specific data as claimed in claim 10, further including:

inserting the user-specific data in the data communicated from the user to the node.

12. The method for managing user-specific data as claimed in claim 10, further including:

retrieving user-specific data from the server when a user initiates a session on the user device; and  
storing the user-specific data locally on the user device.

5

13. A method for managing user-specific data, comprising:  
automatically synchronizing user profile settings stored locally on a user device with user-specific data stored in a server, the user-specific data associated with a user  
10 currently logged on the user device;

monitoring local user-specific data settings on the user device;

detecting changes in the local user-specific data settings; and

15 transmitting the changes to the server for storing as the user-specific data,

wherein the user-specific data stored in the server can be retrieved and used the next time the user logs in regardless of whether the user logs into the user device or  
20 another user device.

14. The method for managing user-specific data as claimed in claim 13, wherein the monitoring includes periodically monitoring local user-specific data settings on the user  
25 device.

15. The method for managing user-specific data as claimed in claim 13, wherein the monitoring includes continuously monitoring local user-specific data settings on the user  
30 device.

16. The method for managing user-specific data as claimed in claim 13, wherein the transmitting includes periodically transmitting the changes to the server for storing as the user-specific data.

5

17. A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps of managing user-specific data, comprising

10        intercepting data communicated between a user operating from a user device and a node on a network;

             determining whether a user-specific data is included in the data;

             extracting the user-specific data; and

15        transmitting the extracted user-specific data to a server for storage,

             wherein the next time the user communicates to the node, the user-specific data can be retrieved and used regardless of which device the user is using for communicating to the node.

20

18. The program storage device as claimed in claim 17, further including:

             inserting the user-specific data in the data communicated from the user to the node.

25

19. The program storage device as claimed in claim 17, further including:

             retrieving user-specific data from the server when a user initiates a session on the user device; and

30        storing the user-specific data locally on the user device.

20. A system for managing user specific-data, comprising:  
a profile client associated with a user device, the user  
device having an Internet software for accessing nodes on the  
5 Internet;

a profile server operable to store user-specific data;  
the profile client operable to retrieve the user-specific  
data associated with a user currently logged into the user  
device, the user-specific data retrieved from the profile  
10 server, the profile client further operable to store the  
retrieved user-specific data on the user device to be used as  
user-specific data for the user when communicating to one or  
more nodes during the time the user is logged into the user  
device,

15 the profile client further operable to detect and  
transmit to the profile server any additional user-specific  
data used in communicating between the user and the one or  
more nodes during a session,

wherein the user-specific data is maintained over  
20 multiple user sessions, independent of devices that the user  
uses to communicate with the one or more of the nodes on the  
Internet.

25